

Town of Rowe
Board of Selectmen – Minutes
Thursday, January 23, 2020 – 5:30 pm
Rowe Town Hall - Hearing Room 1

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Chair Chuck Sokol at 5:35 p.m.

Announcement of recording devices: two recording devices

Present: Chair Chuck Sokol, Ed Silva, Selectman and Executive Secretary Janice Boudreau

Absent: Vice-Chair Jennifer Morse

Audience: Finance Committee: Loretta Dionne, C. Selmi Hyytinen, Laurie Pike, and Waye Zavotka, Chair (participating via remote)

Board of Assessors: Rick Williams, Chair

Cemetery Commission: Jim Williams, Chair and Jay Williams

Board of Health: Maggie Rice, Chair

Citizens: Joanne Semanie

- I. 01/23/20 Agenda
- II. Call to Order: 5:36 p.m.
- III. Announcement of recording devices: One
- IV. Scheduled Presentations/Joint Meetings

A. 5:45 Cemetery Commission:

- Resignation: Cemetery Commission Chair Jim Williams said that Earl Carlow resigned from the Cemetery Commission and asked that Marilyn Wilson be appointed to the commission until the next election.

MOTION TO APPOINT: CHAIR SOKOL MADE A MOTION TO APPOINT MARILYN WILSON AS CEMETERY COMMISSION MEMBER TO SERVE OUT THE VACATED TERM UNTIL THE NEXT ELECTION. THE MOTION, SECONDED BY SELECTMAN SILVA, WAS ACCEPTED.
(VOTE: 2-0-0)

- North Cemetery: Mr. Williams reported working on the North Cemetery to expand the cemetery and the difficulties with having to monitor the stump burning to comply with law concerning burn times. There was discussion about compensating Mr. Williams for this work.
- West Cemetery: Mr. Williams said the fence at West Cemetery was replaced and adhering to MA prevailing wages had increased the costs.
- Stone Repair: Mr. Williams expressed the need to have old stones repaired for preservation and history. It was decided to obtain costs for this work and decide how much to set aside for the purpose. Chair Zavotka expressed the importance of preserving the stone for the history of Rowe.
- Cost Breakdown: Finance Committee asked for the Commission to provide more detail with break out costs for regular maintenance and special projects.

B. 5:45-6:00 Conservation Commission: No budget was presented, so it is level funded.

C. 6:00-6:20 Planning Board: Chair Roberson said he was unable to make the meeting and members reviewed the budget items presented.

- Legal Services: The Planning Board requested \$10,000.00 for legal expenses in the event that a big issue requiring legal work came before the board which was a large increase. There was discussion about using Town Counsel that had more resources and was very responsive. Following discussion, it was decided to look into whether or not Selectmen could require a Town Board or Committee to use Town Counsel or limited to making a strong recommendation. It was noted that they had not provided a narrative concerning any specific situation on the horizon.

Loretta Dionne joined the meeting at 6:26 p.m.

- Stipends: Planning Board requested that \$1000.00 be paid to each member. There was discussion about Stipends having no standardization in town. Finance Committee Dionne said that the Board should provide a log as to how much time they spend and how often they met and how much work they perform that is required above and beyond meeting times. Due to the familial ties, a proper study of stipends could not be made and the stipend issue remains outstanding.
- Finance Committee Recommendation: Finance Committee recommended level funding.

Maggie Rice joined the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

D. 6:20-6:40 Municipal Light Plant: No change from last year's budget request of \$7,800.00.

E. 6:40-7:15 Board of Health:

- Recycling: Board of Health (BOH) Chair Maggie Rice reported that the tag system was working well at the Refuse Gardens and the trash tonnage has gone down. The recycling costs have increased and will rise due to the lack of resources to recycle waste. Jan Ameen, Director of Franklin County Solid Waste Management District (FCSWMD) is in the process of negotiating a contract for the District and the cost increase for recycling is unknown at this time.
- Pay Rates: Chair Rice said not all BOH workers receive a cost of living pay increase, rather increases are based on performance reviews, merit based within a range. The BOH is thinking about a cap for the department workers.
- Mosquito District: Chair Rice said the Mosquito Control District (MCD) has never been in the budget, however, due to the increased threat of Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) she thought the town should participate in the program. The initial payment of \$5,000.00 was approved at the recent Special Town Meeting and BOH requests that it be funded for 3 years. Once the town qualifies for the Municipal Vulnerability Grant (MVP) it may be possible to apply for grants to pay for a portion of the Mosquito Control District. The Mosquito District reported that if they can trap mosquitos for 3 years in a row they can find out where located they can treat the larvae in the areas of higher concentration.
- Refuse Gardens Requests: BOH requested funding for cameras at the Refuse Gardens to see who is violating the law by leaving trash when the facility is not open. Now that there is internet at the cameras could be easily installed. BOH also requested funding to replace the lock at the gate since to update and track who has keys. There is a need for a roof over the end of the compactor and BOH is in the process of obtaining quotes for the work recommended by Trinity Engineering.
- Grant Discussion: Chair Rice said BOH will be meeting with FCSWMD Director Jan Ameen at the next meeting and will review the costs for participating in a MA Dept. of Environmental Protection grant for \$8,000.00 to help fund the purchase of a paper compactor. The paper compactor reduces the number of hauls out of the Refuse Gardens and could potentially pay for itself in 3 years. BOH will discuss the work site that will be required to determine how much the town share will be

required to complete the project. There was discussion about separating out glass and that it was not feasible for Rowe to pursue

Maggie Rice left the meeting at 7:20 p.m.

Rick Williams joined the meeting at 7:20 p.m.

- F. 7:20 Board of Assessors: Board of Assessors Chair Rick Williams presented the FY21 Budget.
- Legal Discussion: Chair Williams explained the Board was working with an Appraisal Consultant who recommended an attorney who specializes working for Appellate Tax Board (ATB) and the 3 towns jointly engaged the firm to work on the abatement claims. It is a unique situation requiring a firm that is conversant with a specific type of commercial and industrial abatements and hiring the Appraisal Consultant as an expert witness. He further explained that this has been a first time that requests for abatement have been brought to Appellate Court requiring legal fees and consultant costs are put into the budget. The hope is that following the appellate court that things will stabilize.
 - Quintennial Revaluations: Chair Williams requested that funds be continued to be put aside each year for the Quintennial Revaluations.
 - Level Funded: The rest of the budget was level funded.
 - Town Owned Lands: C. Selmi Hyytinen asked a question about town owned lands and whether they could be sold. Chair Williams explained there was extensive work done to do so and what remained were parcels that did not have a clear title preventing the sale. Most of the minimal lots were only valuable to an abutter.

V. Unforeseen Business (within preceding 48 hours)

Davis Mine Road Discussion: There was discussion about Davis Mine Road mud issues. C. Selmi said there was a citizen that has strong opinion about maintaining his road. Selectman Silva said he and Superintendent spoke about having a plan to stockpiling rock at the ready. There was discussion about speaking with Superintendent to finalize plan. Chair Sokol said the citizen needs to present his opinions to the Board of Selectmen.

- VI. Adjournment: Seeing no further business, Chair Sokol made a motion to adjourn the Meeting at 7:53 p.m. The motion, seconded by Selectman Silva, was accepted. (vote: 2 -0-0)

Respectfully Submitted,

Janice Boudreau, Executive Secretary

Approval Date: 2/13/2020

Approved:



Chuck Sokol, Chair

Selectman Jennifer Morse, Vice-Chair



Selectman Ed Silva

Documents:

- Agenda 01/23/20
- Budget: Board of Assessors
- Budget: Board of Health
- Budget: Planning Board

Mail:

- Resignation letter Earl Carlow
- MMA Annual Meeting letter